

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT WITH HIGHER LEVEL THINKING

One way to develop vocabulary at a higher level of thought is to categorize the words based on any commonality among the words. Students can then challenge themselves by looking for new categories.

Another powerful strategy for vocabulary is to place related words on a continuum based on a specified aspect of comparison. Consider the examples:

First example: The following are all related to the verb **walk**.

First activity With your team, discuss the words you know and put a **+** next to words with a positive connotation, **–** next to words with a negative connotation and a **0** next to words that are neutral, neither positive nor negative.

stride	stomp	glide	march	trudge	lumber
tip-toe	saunter	plod	stumble	stagger	dance
pad	limp	hobble	sneak	slip	creep
zip	waddle	saunter	shuffle	meander	wander
drift	ramble	roam	rove	straggle	stray
stroll	tour	traipse			

Second activity: With your team, discuss the words you know that would reflect the aspect of comparison assigned to your team. Select a few words from the list that convey the aspect being compared and place them on the continuum. Each team member will role-play one of the words you chose, and the class will try to guess the word.

the clumsiest to _____ the most agile

the softest to _____ the loudest

the slowest to _____ the fastest

the lightest to _____ the heaviest

the most indirect to _____ the most direct

Activity three: Choose words from the list and use them in an original sentence. To demonstrate precise understanding of the chosen vocabulary, include two additional sentences (before and/or after) to provide a context for the sentence containing the word.

A second example: other verbs for **talk**

First activity With your team, discuss the words you know and put a **+** next to words with a positive connotation, **–** next to words with a negative connotation and a **0** next to words that are neutral, neither positive nor negative.

grumble	murmur	mumble	whisper	shout	scream
declare	say	chatter	gossip	lecture	report
blab	chat	comment	harangue	jabber	mutter
plead	prattle	preach	rant	speak	spout
tattle	announce	articulate	converse	communicate	
debate	discuss	express	proclaim	pronounce	

Second activity: With your team, discuss the words you know that would reflect the aspect of comparison assigned to your team. Select a few words from the list that convey the aspect being compared and place them on the continuum.

the softest to _____ the loudest

the most insignificant to _____ the most important

the most incomprehensible _____ the most comprehensible

the most negative _____ the most positive

the fewest words _____ the most words

Activity three: Choose words from the list and use them in an original sentence. To demonstrate precise understanding of the chosen vocabulary, include two additional sentences (before and/or after) to provide a context for the sentence containing the word.